

**Congress of the United States**  
**House of Representatives**  
**Washington, DC 20515-2901**

March 29, 2017

The Honorable Charlie Dent  
Chairman  
Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans  
Affairs, and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
HVC-227, The Capitol  
Washington, DC 20515

The Honorable Debbie Wasserman Schultz  
Ranking Member  
Subcommittee on Military Construction, Veterans  
Affairs, and Related Agencies  
U.S. House of Representatives  
1016 Longworth House Office Building  
Washington, DC 20515

Dear Chairman Dent and Ranking Member Wasserman Schultz:

As you prepare the Military Construction, Veterans Affairs and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year 2018, I respectfully request an increase in funding for Adaptive Sports Grants of \$2,000,000 for a total of \$10,000,000.

The number of veterans seeking one or more forms of healthcare through the VA and/or one of its affiliated providers continues to increase. Nationwide, approximately 10,000 veterans participate in and benefit from adaptive sports programs funded by the VA, and those who participate are significantly more likely to report better health and higher satisfaction with life. Adaptive sports have proven to be a vital part of many veterans' personal healthcare plans and long-term wellness. Since the passage of the VA Expiring Authorities Extension Act of 2013 (PL 113-59), and its subsequent reauthorizations, the VA's adaptive sports program has received level funding at \$8,000,000 each fiscal year.

I am concerned that due to increased demand for adaptive sports services by veterans, current funding levels are insufficient. We need a health care system for our nation's veterans that is innovative and effective. I urge you to increase funding for the VA's Adaptive Sports Grants Program to \$10,000,000 for the coming fiscal year.

I also request the Committee include the following report language in the FY18 bill:

"Adaptive sports.—The Committee recommends \$10,000,000 for adaptive sports programs. The Committee recognizes that veterans have shown marked improvements in mental and physical health from participating in adaptive sports and recreational therapy, and that veterans have expressed that there is a need for the VA to include these activities in the healthcare services it offers. The Committee also recognizes that adaptive sports and recreational therapy provides a low-cost alternative to other healthcare services that produce similar health outcomes."

Thank you for your consideration and for your leadership on behalf of our veterans.

Sincerely,

  
Carol Shea-Porter  
Member of Congress